



Exhibition Ed
in the back.

Ulrich Middeldorf



John George Wille.

Portrait of the Artist

Halm, pinxt.

Edwin Roffe, sc.



THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
THE EARLY YEARS OF THE
WORLD-FAMOUS

JOHN GEORGE WILLE

“GRAVEUR DU ROI.”

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,
BY

Alfred Proffe.

(ENGRAVER)

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE EARLY YEARS OF
THAT WORLD-FAMOUS ENGRAVER:

J.-G. WILLE;

“ GRAVEUR DU ROI.”



ARRIVED at the age of nearly eighty years, it seems to me now time, my dear son, to write, according to your desires, such passages of my life as I can still call to mind. I must at first tell you, that my father, JOHN PHILIP WILLE, was a citizen of Königsberg, a very ancient place, the chief seat of a bailiwick, and situated upon the confines of Wetteravia: — my mother's name was ANNE ELIZABETH ZIMMERMAN. My father did not live precisely in Königsberg itself, but in the Bieberthal; — his dwelling was near the source of the Bieber; — and it was in that neighbourhood that he cultivated his rural property, which was tolerably extensive, and there I was Born, upon the Fifth day of November, in the year 1715. I was the eldest of seven children, six sons and one daughter, born to my father by his two wives. My health was perfect; — and it was observed of me that my natural turn was cheerful, but I was restless, self-willed, and sometimes even capricious, — without being ill-disposed.

At the age of between two and three years, it was my supreme happiness to find myself, with a piece of white chalk in my hand, lying on the floor of the parlour, and sketching in birds, trees, or any other objects which may have struck me. Woe betide any one who had the temerity to walk over my productions! In the meanwhile, my father, having remarked my liveliness and sharpness, and that I was always restless and doing something, resolved to teach me to read and write, nor were the lessons I had without their fruit.

My father did not choose to send me to school until I was between six and seven years of age, on account of the difficulty which there would have been for a child, while too young, to ascend the hill upon which Kœnigsberg is situated, and which was a quarter of a league from our habitation. My father, then, at the before-named age, sent me to school, and, over and above my lessons in our own language, I was obliged to add lessons in Latin. This was double work, from whence, nevertheless, owing to my happy memory, I extricated myself pretty creditably. My master even gave me some commendation, nor was he dissatisfied either with my writing in the two languages, but he did not at all approve of seeing the margins of my books loaded with scrawls of drawings. I often drew

in the faces of any of my school-fellows who appeared to me to be at all comical, and I represented them upon paper by such ridiculous forms, that some were by no means pleased; while others only laughed at these things. Besides this, I also diverted myself by composing ironical verses, suitable to my portraits. Upon our play-days, I used to perambulate the remains of the ancient Castle of Königsberg, which had been dreadfully ruined by the Swedes during the THIRTY-YEARS' WAR, and from which castle I used to make sketches. From this time I date the beginning of that pleasure which I have always felt in drawing landscape. During these times there used to come regularly into our parts of the world, in quest of provisions, a Friar who was also the gardener of the Capuchin Convent of Wetzler. My father valued this Friar, for he discoursed learnedly concerning the grafting of certain plum-trees, the planting of cabbages and radishes, and the growth of cucumbers in dry or damp grounds.

This good Friar happening to be with us one day, just at the time that my father had bought, to please me, some figures from a Tyrolese print-chapman, who was in the house, when the Friar — having remarked what pleasure this acquisition gave me, took from the pocket of his frock, a large portfolio, well furnished

with figures from the manufactory of Jerome Wolf, of Augsburg, at the same time requesting my acceptance of them. This gift consisted of six large sheets of paper, each sheet containing eighteen figures. Thus I became the possessor, in an instant, without having dreamed of such a thing, of a fine collection of one hundred and eight subjects, to be numbered up, and did I not, likewise, take pleasure in contemplating the abundance of their staring colours of green, blue, and red? Nor did the Friar remain unrewarded, for on this occasion he was compensated with a string of black-puddings, instead of a pot of butter, or a dozen of eggs. At this he was visibly touched; joy shone upon his face when he deposited the present, above-named, in his wallet; which as yet was empty. He carried his gratitude still further, for he invited me to come and see him at Wetzlar, assuring me that he would show me pictures admired by everybody, and which the Friars had the good fortune to possess in the cloisters of their Convent. It was objected to this, that I was very young to undertake a journey of two leagues, but the Friar replied, "His dear aunt here will be so good as to come with him," which my aunt promised to do, the more willingly as she had some female friends in that village. Some days afterwards,

upon one of my holidays, my aunt took me with her, but the Friar was absent. Nevertheless, after an hour he returned from a journey which he had been making to the villages of Hüttenberg, and he was laden with potatoes and dry garden-beans; — however, as soon as he was disencumbered of his useful burthen, he came forward to receive us, with the most remarkable friendliness. He took me by the hand, and conducted me into the Cloisters, saying to me; “ Look at this row of arches, of which the glass windows are charged and ornamented with the arms of sundry Lords who had had those arms painted, some from devotion, some from good-nature, and some from vanity ! ” He spoke to me much about the colours of Heraldry, of which I comprehended nothing. At length, at the last arch, he bade me remark some very curious arms! “ Those,” said the Friar, “ belonged to a Lord, a great warrior, who was killed in the battle of Mühlberg, against the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Look here, my friend,” continued the Friar, “ above those arms, at the two blue harquebuses, accompanied with lighted matches ! It was Maurice of Saxony who added those two pieces to the arms of this Lord, who was slain in the field of honour ! But look at those two golden battering-rams upon a field of azure ! Do you like those batter-

ing-rams?" A slight inclination of my head was the answer. "Well then," resumed the Friar, "I must tell you the history of them. Amongst the ancestors of our slain hero, there were two brothers, very active, strong, and licentious men, but pious. They went to the Crusades, like many others in the eleventh century, partly from zeal, and partly for the remission of their sins, which had multiplied extremely. They sold their possessions to the anchorites in the mountains of Bohemia, in order to procure money, and by that means live freely upon their way to the East, with the army of the Christians. They distinguished themselves in that country by incredible deeds of arms, and above all by the taking of Joppa, the gates of which they broke open with heavy blows from clubs, made in the shape of a ram. After such a remarkable action, they received from the chiefs of the army, permission, not only for themselves, but for their descendants, to bear, as significant arms, these rams, the instruments of their glory; likewise, they had the exclusive privilege of breaking open the gates of the strong places in the East. These admirable arms," continued the Friar, "have since been sent to us, we know not by whom; — but they must have been painted long ago; — some think they were done by Lucas Kranach, and others

think they were done by Albert Dürer." As I then knew nothing of those masters, I made no reply, and the Friar, perceiving that I began to grow tired, and perhaps beginning to be tired himself, embraced me cordially, saying, "Farewell, my child; I hope that you have been well pleased with the pictures, and with me. Come again, and see me in the next autumn, when I will give you pears, and nuts, and rolls glazed with the yolk of eggs!"

I thanked the Friar for all his kindnesses, at the same time making him a most profound bow, with my hat in my hand; and then I returned, awkwardly enough, to bow to him again; but he was gone. My aunt, during my absence, had made some calls; but, upon my return, I found her already seated upon a bench at the door of the Convent. I at once told her how much I was suffering from hunger. She was compassionate, and immediately bought a cake sprinkled over with grains of salt and cumin, which I caused to disappear in an instant. My aunt herself felt an appetite, for she took me to one of her female friends, who, for more than thirty years past, had sold Spanish chocolate, made at Wetzlar, without cocoa or vanilla, and of an exquisite flavour, as affirmed, This worthy tradeswoman invited us to dinner, and she at

first offered us a vermicelli of that country; then some lettuces dressed in their own liquor, with sausages — grilled upon the coals. Two bottles of wine; one, red, from the hills of the Lerne, and another, from the banks of the Rhine, appeared upon the table. To me was given one very little glass of each, and the two ladies drank the rest. At length coffee made its appearance, and this seemed to me to be made with grains from the Westerwald Forest, where acons are not very scarce, and although it was plentifully mixed up with pounded sugar, this coffee displeased me extremely. At last my aunt took leave of her friend, as I did also, making my obeisances after the manner of scholars who are new to the world, and we did not arrive home until night-fall. My father desired to have an account of my picturesque pilgrimage, and of what advantage I had reaped from it; — at which account he laughed heartily, but at the same time advising me to make no more of such excursions, and then he sent me back to my books, to study my lessons. Nevertheless, during the next year, after making supplications, I obtained from my father the permission to set out again, upon some new travels. The stories which I had heard told of the wonders to be seen in the Church of Saint Elizabeth, at Marburg, kindled

my imagination very strangely ; I desired, and sought with ardour for, some occasion to go there, and one soon presented itself to me. In our valley is found a white marble, which the peasants of the district reduced into lime, and then annually carted it for sale to Marburg, where it is in esteem. It was now resolved that I should be sent along with some of these worthy people, who were all known to us. Sometimes, in this journey, I went on foot, and sometimes I was seated upon one or other of the waggons, when at last, on the second day, (having accomplished our six leagues), we arrived at the place of our destination, after having slept very comfortably, one night, in a barn, upon a heap of hay. As soon as we found ourselves in Marburg, I quitted my conductors. I walked past the Town-Hall, of which the pediment had niches, furnished with figures the size of life, which figures some internal mechanism caused to act, and make a noise, — moving as many times as the clock struck. However, though all this was new to me, I scarcely made any stay, but ran on further, seeking for the Church, which I soon found, but it was not open. I was directed to a verger who obtained the keys, and by the means of some money which I gave to him, he eagerly opened one of the doors, and let me go in. I

saw at first, upon the right and left of the door, the sufficiently-gothic statues of the "Land" Commanders of orders who had possessed that dignity at Marburg since the institution of the Teutonic Order. They seemed to be in a dress, half-monkish, half-military, and I regretted, while contemplating these figures, that I had neither chalk, nor paper, nor time, to draw some of them, although I was certainly not competent to do so with the smallest degree of correctness. Upon proceeding forwards, and on my right hand, I beheld, with pleasure and respect, in a grated niche, — the statue of Saint Elizabeth, who had been the daughter of a King of Hungary, and married to a Landgrave; Lewis; who was not the best prince of his age. She had a crown upon her head, and the model of that Church which she had built, was in her right hand. Before her statue were several steps, which, as well as the pavement, were much worn with the genuflexions and the bowings made by the numerous Pilgrims who formerly resorted there to pay their devotions. Upon the left-hand, and opposite to the Statue of Saint Elizabeth, there was a Chapel, in which the ancient Landgraves of Hesse had their burying-place.

My mentor, upon our entering this chapel, made me take notice of the life-size statues of those who there

lie buried. He told me their names, and surnames; and gave me some account of the chief event in the life of each of them. They were all standing up, and completely armed, according to the use of the times in which they had lived. There was one, lying on its back, upon the ground, and as if gnawed by reptiles. I was astonished at this figure, and almost frightened. My conductor perceived this, and told me its history. "This prince," said he, "was one of the most impious of men; one, who instead of regarding the festivals and the Sundays of the Church, attended only to the chase! Therefore, he was most severely punished; — for he broke his neck by a fall from his horse, in a forest far away from his attendants, and his body was not found till long after this accident, gnawed as it is represented in this sculpture which you now see before you." Opposite to these statues were to be seen represented, in several little compartments, the virtuous actions and miracles of Saint Elizabeth; they were all carved in relief upon wood, and variously painted, according to the custom of those remote ages. In the last compartment, the husband of the Saint, who with a number of the Noblesse, had gone to the Crusades, appeared upon horseback, and followed by his brave Hessians, proceeding on his way for the conquest of

the Holy Land, from whence he never returned. In the center of the Church, and over the pulpit of the preacher, there hung a piece of drapery, formed like a pavilion, which we were assured was the work of Saint Elizabeth's own hands. I should have desired to have stayed some time longer in this Church, in order to see the rest of the curiosities, which appeared to me numerous, but the hour of noon sounded, and I was obliged to quit, for the waggoners had apprized me that about this hour they should set forth upon their way back again to their own homes. I could, therefore, only cast a look at the outside of this venerable building, and then ran to rejoin my conductors, who were coming from a good dinner. They appeared to me very well satisfied, but for my part, I felt my head to be far more full of figures, than my stomach was of viands. I found means, however, although very hastily, to satisfy this last want, and my conductors then set forth upon their journey, and by the same road which had taken us to Marburg. Upon the journey home, I talked much less with my conductors than I had done before; — I did nothing but pass and repass through my mind, the objects which had struck me so much in the Church, and which I contemplated in my thoughts with most infinite pleasure. Nevertheless, one of our

waggoners often interrupted my reflections by songs in a language and to a music which was onewhile gay, and onewhile melancholy; and composed, according to all appearances, in the time of *Otho the Great!* These songs are now known only to the country-folks, from the account given to me by the Mayor of the village where we lodged for the night, (for he was an Inn-keeper), and they were songs which turned upon the amours, the deeds of arms, the misfortunes, and even the fatal ends of the ancient Chevaliers. This induced me to consider attentively the ruined Castles situated upon the hills lying right and left of our road, in which Castles those ancient warriors, — who were now being treated of, — had formerly ensconced themselves. “ *After all, what objects these would be to make drawings from,*” I said to myself !

Upon the next day I arrived at my father’s house, and he received me most kindly, saying, after I had embraced him, “ *It seems to me, my Son, that you are very well, and that I am glad to see.*” Then he gave plenty of drink to my conductors, and thanked them for the care they had taken of me during the journey, for all which they made their obeisances after their manner, and then returned very well satisfied, to their own village. “ *Well, now, my Son,*” said my father,

"tell me a little of what you have seen and observed, and then I shall be able to judge whether you ought to consider yourself as better satisfied with having been to Marburg than to Wetzlar." These words gave me great encouragement, and I played the part of orator and storyteller with all the enthusiasm of a school-boy who had never seen anything interesting before, and who confounds himself from the quantity of matter with which his head is filled!

My Father, — having listened to me very patiently, seemed tolerably well satisfied; — "*But now,*" said he, "*all this is very good; still here are now some fine days, during which you have been absent from school; go again to your books; learn your lessons, and make up for the time you have lost in travelling.*"

I felt that it was only right of me to submit to this paternal advice, and upon the next day, accompanied by two of my brothers, and by some children of the neighbourhood, I was once more threading the way to our mountain. "*Alas!*" said I to myself, "*what pleasure should I not have, if our school was at Marburg, instead of being at Kænigsberg!*" After all, I might have been consoled, for I quickly regained all that I had a little neglected, and, even independently of my duty, I was occupied with the idea, founded upon what

I had seen, of carving — in relief — some figures upon wood; but many things necessary for the execution of my project I was absolutely without. I was obliged then, after reflection, to seek for some other means of satisfying myself, and I was so fortunate as to find upon the banks of the Canal, (by which the waters that take their rise from the Bieber,* are forced to flow towards the mills), some potter's earth, which I at once made use of to model some ridiculous heads, or masques with. I made them with squinting eyes, wrinkled foreheads, and gaping mouths; their forms, in general, were indifferent; their destination was fixed beforehand, and I placed them at the little doors of our bee-hives, of which my father possessed a certain number. Nothing could well have been more laughable than the cut-goings and the in-comings of these flying insects, through the mouths of my masques; but all this was but of short duration; my masques were

* This little river falls into the *Larne*, near *Giessen*; its course is only one league and a half. Upon its banks there are twelve mills, a foundry, and an iron-forge; a hamlet, some villages, and four or five houses of nobles. Besides this, towards the upper part of the valley, there were six or seven lime-kilns. [*Note by J. G. WILLE.*]

soaked by the rain, dried up by the sun, and, falling into ruin, were no more thought of by me. And now that winter was making its approach, and the evenings were becoming long, I thought that it would be infinitely agreeable, if, after learning my lessons, which did not take me very long, I could employ myself according to my own fancies. In my father's collection of books, there was a large *Bible*, filled with prints, which prints I often pleased myself with looking at, and several times already, the thought had come to me of making, (without copying the prints,) drawings similar to those events related in the *Bible*, which were susceptible of being represented, I spoke of this idea to my father, who, to my great delight, approved of it, and I thereupon gave him a detail of the things which would be necessary to me for the execution of my project. My father, having listened to me very calmly, then said, "*My son, will you be persevering in doing this that you are proposing?*" Of that I assured him in the most lively manner, and after this assurance, he had the goodness to buy for me himself some drawing-paper, out of which I made a quarto volume; some brushes; some of those boxes of colours which are manufactured at Nuremberg, and even cut several pens for me with great dexterity.

No one in the world could have been more happy than all this made me, and, with impatience, I got myself ready to make my designs, but I did not care to set about them until everyone had supped, and had gone to bed; for I wanted to be alone with my lamp! At length THE TIME CAME! I then read a chapter, and thinking over the event therein recorded, I composed the arrangement of my figures according to such small conceptions as I then had. I began, of course, with the *Creation*, and when I had driven *Adam* and *Eve* out of *Paradise*, and had made *Abel* to be slain by *Cain*, I began to break into the order of the chapters; for one chapter presented to me circumstances more attractive than another. For instance — I designed, with satisfaction, *Moses* striking the rock from which the water rushes forth to quench the thirst of the *Jews*; then came *Sampson* vigorously killing the thousand *Philistines*; *Abraham* preparing to sacrifice his Son; *Potiphar's* wife holding *Joseph* by his garments; in short, it was all disorder; then a dislike began to ensue, so that my grand resolution of designing the Historical facts of the *Bible*, from the beginning of the Old Testament up to the end of the Apocalypse in the New, was very much weakened. Nevertheless, every night

one of my drawings was completed, and, in the morning, before I went out to school, I shew the drawing to my father, who, indeed, encouraged me; but, at length, perceiving the disorder which there was in my distribution of subjects, he told me, with some degree of vexation, that he had foreseen my unsteadiness. I was afflicted at this, but said nothing; my father's friendship was precious and necessary to me, and although I had left off this kind of designs, I still went on with fancy-pieces, or, again, I read old Romances which were esteemed by the people, such as the *Four Sons of Aymon*, the *Beautiful Melusina*, *Duke Ernest*, and others; but this amusement did not last long; variety was necessary for me, and I had my father's permission to rummage amongst his books at my will! Could I fail to make my use of them? I found large volumes on Botany, in which the plants — although engraved upon wood, seemed to me very beautifully executed, and most exactly represented; — and also the virtue or unwholesomeness of each thing clearly explained. This inspection gave me a longing to go forth *simpling!* especially as the Spring was now come, and the month of May not far off. In the meanwhile, and first of all, I amused myself in our gardens by grafting several kinds of shrubs which

were fit for that operation, and with which grafting I succeeded, if not completely, at least well enough for me to pride myself upon it !

At this same period it recurred to my mind, that the Friar, who was also the gardener of the Wetzler Convent, had told my father, (I being by,) that it was quite possible to engraft the apple-tree upon the willow, and the pear-tree upon the hawthorn, and that this practice was not only a good one, but its success *absolutely certain !* *

Such a practice as this appeared to me to be very curious, and it ran so much in my head, that I put it quickly to the test, and with the most particular care. “ *What an excellent discovery is this,*” I said to myself; “ *the willows upon the banks of our rivers, and the hawthorns in our hedges, will, in the long run, bear*

* Some light is thrown upon young WILLE's disappointments, when we learn that in grafting, “ the stock and scion must not be of species extremely dissimilar.” . Furthermore, we are told that “ no credit is due to the statements of ancient authors, about vines grafted on fig-trees, apples on planes, &c.—the semblance of which can only have been brought about by some delusive artifice; for all attempts at grafting fail, except among plants of the same *genus*, or, at the least, of the same *natural* family.

useful fruits !” Every day I went to look at my engraftings ; — my work delighted me, and from one moment to another I was hoping for the foliage to appear ; and when, after infinite expectation I saw that everything had so well succeeded, I was quite ashamed of the facility with which I had fallen into the trap !

After this excellent undertaking, I prepared myself for my herbalizing, and already I had clean rooted up several sorts of plants growing by the side of the pathway. These plants my brothers helped me to carry into the house, — where I desired to compare them with their printed representations ! But this did not suffice, and soon I rambled about the valleys, the woods, and the mountains, where I saw plants in the greatest variety, and all of different species, the most beautiful and interesting of which I drew. I was always carrying a load of such to the house, where, being thrown pell-mell, I often found myself in error with respect to the classification of species according to their gender or parentage. In the meanwhile I desired to be useful, and, following the directions contained in our volumes, I compounded liquors by the infusion of plants designated for that purpose, and also medicaments from

others. After these operations, and with ample confidence, I offered my drugs, even gratis, to everyone whom I thought in need of them; but none would deign to make use of my compounds. I was made game of, to my mortification; and even worse still was insinuated; for I was told that I pretended to be a healer of maladies, and that, perhaps, I was only a young Poisoner, who imagined that he had the privilege and the science, to do that which the old doctors do by habitude, or by chance, in order to gain a livelihood, and strengthen their reputation. My trouble, although agreeable to myself, was thus once more thrown away. At last, my father, seeing my unsteadiness, and the variety of my occupations, told me, — that if I wished to study thoroughly, — he would place me at the University. I answered him, with submissiveness, that I desired to become an ARTIST, and that PAINTING would please me the most. “*Well, my son,*” replied he, “*we will fix upon that, and we shall see what will come of it! It is proper to be useful,*” pursued my father, “*both to one’s self and to others in this world, by means of some honest calling, whatever it may be; besides, it is necessary that our conduct should be well-regulated; and would it not be shameful to be without social virtue? But at this present*

time," still continued he, "*I think that it will be necessary for you to learn arithmetic, and for that purpose, I shall send you to Giessen."*

I thanked my father for his kindness, and in a few days afterwards he actually sent me off to one of my uncles, who was an owner and inspector of mills in that city. This uncle, with whom I was now lodged, loved me like a son. He was an excellent man;—good-humoured, agreeable in society, a little ironical, but esteemed by everybody. From my uncle's house I used to go every day to a professor of calculation, named M. Grollmann, who taught arithmetic, either at his own place, or in the City, and this worthy man often expressed himself as satisfied with me, on account of my quickness in understanding. During this study, I had formed an acquaintance with an amiable young man, who was studying at the University, and who possessed some geographical charts which he allowed me to use for my instruction. He knew, moreover, a little of geometry, and some rules of perspective, of which, likewise, I availed myself, and they all became useful to me in the end. Also, in order to let this young student see how much I felt his course of action towards me, I presented to him several of my drawings, which he accepted very

gladly, and admired them, for he was not at all a connoisseur. After a while, my father judged it quite necessary to call me home again, and, as I could not be idle, the idea struck me of exercising myself in mechanics, — and I began by hydraulic machines, without completing them; also, I tried to construct a clock upon the principles of that belonging to the Church at Kœnigsberg, which I had most carefully examined; — but all this labour, begun with so much ardour, I abandoned from my customary inconstancy, and without regret. At last, my father, seeing the variety of my occupations, and knowing the intention which I had of studying PAINTING, began seriously to inform himself whether there was not, in some one of the neighbouring towns, any PAINTER of repute, who was in a position to teach the principles of an ART which must have innumerable difficulties.

Several Artists were named to my father, and amongst the rest a portrait-painter, who was said to be a superior genius, and whose reputation had passed through the gates of the city, even to the extent of two leagues round about; — where, however, the number of amateurs was not great, but that circumstance was not the fault of the Painter in question. In consequence of this eulogium, although somewhat

of an equivocal one, my father undertook the requisite journey, and waited upon this Painter, to whom he explained that amongst his sons, he had one who earnestly desired to study the Art of Painting under such a celebrated master, and that, acting upon the advice of connoisseurs, he, my father, — had thought he could not do better than address himself to him.

“ You are right,” answered the master; “ I am able to contend with the best of those in my own department; but as to what concerns History, Landscape, Sea-pieces, or those caricatures of Merry-makings, I do not meddle with them, nor do I care for them. I have travelled much,” continued he, “ I have been slandered; I have been held up as an impudent quack, who imposes only upon the ignorant and the stupid; but it was jealousy which howled against me ! ”

“ And that is a monster who never sleeps I believe,” answered my father. “ But, Sir, I desire to know whether my son may have the good-fortune to gain profit by your lessons, and, also, upon what terms ? ”

“ I will tell you in a moment,” replied the master, with a certain degree of that hauteur which always

so ill becomes a superior man. "First of all, consider some of my productions. Look at this portrait; it is that of one of our city-council, a Taw-maker by trade, and he pays me for my art with excellent goat-skinsful of whale oil; a commodity always very useful in good housekeeping. And this other portrait; it is that of a Brazier, who is also one of the city-council. I lodge with him, as you perceive, and by way of recompense for my labours, I have paid him no rent for a whole year. Confess, that these gentlemen have a certain noble severity in their looks, which is in conformity with their position!"

My father replied, "I do confess it." After this eulogium rendered by the Painter to himself, — and this exposition of the advantages he derived from his Art, — he drew forth from one of the corners of his apartment a PICTURE, from which he removed the dust, at the same time saying to my father, "Here is a child of my genius! It is a fox scranching up a hen; and although I have never seen a fox in my life, I have painted it so well, that he might appear to be speaking to you!"

"*Ah! this is a Fox,*" said my father, adding, "*I have occasionally seen one, but I am no connoisseur.*"

"I see that," replied the Painter, who also added,

“ My Fox is a sublime Fox; — but as to Hens, I know them, — and have eaten them in nature, and with pleasure too, when the occasion has arisen; besides,” continued he, “ I am esteemed hereabouts ! As a proof of all this ! Every time, when, having nothing else to do, I walk along the streets, in a hat edged with gold, my red laced-vest of the same length as my brown habit; my square-toed shoes, and my sword by my side, everybody gives me the salute, cap-in-hand ! ”

“ I congratulate you upon such things, Sir,” said my father, anew repeating the enquiry, whether he might hope the good fortune for his son, of being admitted as a pupil, and upon what conditions ! ”

“ Nothing is more easy for you to accomplish,” answered the Painter. “ Each year you shall pay me a sum upon which we will agree, and, by a regular engagement, your son shall remain with me during seven consecutive years.”

“ That, Sir, would seem to me to be a kind of slavery,” replied my father; “ for,” continued he, “ I had always thought that the privilege of a liberal Art was Liberty; and that in consequence, the Master could dismiss his Pupil whenever he thought proper, and that the Pupil might quit the Master,

if he were not satisfied with that Master." "I cannot alter anything of that which I have verbally explained to you," answered the Painter; — and thereupon my father took his leave.





